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Educate

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Education Programs



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Introduction to the Frontier Culture Museum

The Frontier Culture Museum is an outdoor, living-history museum and educational institution of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Museum currently features nine permanent, outdoor exhibits comprised of traditional farm buildings from Ireland, England, Germany, West Africa, and western Virginia. The Museum's exhibits serve as the settings for interpretative and educational programs designed to increase public knowledge of the diverse Old World origins of early immigrants to America, of how these immigrants lived in their homelands, how they came to America, and how the way-of-life they created together on the American frontier has shaped life the United States.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Frontier Culture Museum is to increase public knowledge of the formation of a distinctive American folk culture from a blending of European, African and indigenous peoples.

Using the Museum as an Extended Classroom

The Museum offers a unique opportunity for teachers to use our exhibits as an extension of the classroom. Our curriculum based education programs are taught by skilled museum educators and adapted to your grade level. Through interactive hands-on experiences, students are taken on a journey to the past.

Education Program Overview

The Frontier Culture Museum offers education programs to suit the needs of all ages, from kindergarten to college. Each educational program is designed to complement learning that takes place in the classroom. Virginia SOL subjects including social studies, language arts, math and science are incorporated into your visit. Teachers may choose from onsite, outreach, or self guided programs. Hands-on activities on the farms vary by season. Note: Weather conditions may affect the availability of some programs.

The following are comments from 2009 Teacher Evaluation Forms:

“Kids loved 1) flintlock demonstration, 2) splitting wood, 3) play acting in the German house, 4) spinning, carding, & asking a million questions at the English house.”

“Great trip!”

“The trip to the museum is always a great learning experience. I appreciate that each student has the opportunity for hands-on learning experiences.”

“Scheduling was easy. Once there, everyone was friendly and helpful. We had a great place to eat lunch. The activities were excellent! The kids really enjoyed being able to participate. They also loved the music. I think the video is engaging for all ages and gives the students an opportunity to see some of the farms they weren’t able to visit due to our time constraints.”

“Each child participated in several hands-on exhibits. The pacing was wonderful and the interpreters extremely knowledgeable. We could not have asked for anything better. Thank you so much. One of the best field trips we’ve been on!”

“We loved everything about our field trip! We appreciated the knowledgeable and informative guides and the “hands-on” chores that our first graders were able to experience! The Museum brings “Long Ago” to life for our young students! Thank you!”

“Puddling” at the West African Farm



Onsite Program Descriptions

The education programs offered by the Museum are outlined below to help you and your students choose a topic and prepare for your visit. With two weeks prior notice, our staff will work with you to insure that the activities and special programs fit your specific curriculum needs.

From Germany to the Valley

In this program, students learn the similarities between the German Farm and the 1820s American Farm in architecture, culture, and daily life. Students learn why many in the Palatinate emigrated to America in the 18th century. The 1820s American Farm showcases the life of an established Valley farmer of German descent. ***Location: German Farm and 1820s American Farm.***

From Ireland to the Valley

Visit the Irish Farm to see what life was like in the north of Ireland in the 18th century and learn why many people made the decision to emigrate to colonial America. Students will then visit the Settlement Farm to learn how an Irish family started their life in the Valley. ***Location: Irish Farm, Irish Forge and 1740s American Settlement Site.***

Frontier Settlement to Farmstead: Becoming an American Farmer

Participate in the recreation of a 1740s farm like those built by some of the first settlers in the Valley of Virginia. Students will work with traditional tools and building techniques, and cultivate the land with hoes and other hand tools. They will also learn about foodways, daily life, and survival on the frontier. The students will then travel to the 1820s American Farm to see how a farm matured as it became established. ***Location: 1740s American Settlement Site and 1820s American Farm.***

Logs & Rakes, Rails & Shakes: Working with Wood and Iron

Two-man saws, wedges, augers, draw knives, lathes and planes: these tools and many others were used in building fences, splitting shingles and building houses. How did a farmer differ from a professional woodworker in level of ability? Students try their hands at using some of these tools. ***Location: 1740s American Settlement Site and Irish Forge.***

Early to Rise: The Life of an Historic Farmer

Step back into the lives of early farmers and discover the roles livestock, field crops, and gardens played in people's lives. Your students try different farm chores and learn how families and communities were organized, and how natural resources affected life for both consumers and producers. Hands-on activities vary by farm and season. ***Location: Choose two farms.***

People on the Move: Immigrants to America

Learn about the factors influencing decisions by peoples of the Old World to come to America. How do you choose what to take with you on such a momentous journey? What was that journey like, anyway? How did they change the cultural landscape in the American colonies? Storytelling is used to emphasize the experiences of colonial immigrants. ***Location: Old World Farm and American Farm.***

From West Africa to West of the Blue Ridge

West Africa and Virginia have a deep historical connection that has almost been forgotten. Your class will explore this connection through the history and culture of the Igbo people, a West African group with an especially strong presence in colonial Virginia. Your class will learn about daily life in a traditional Igbo household, about the transatlantic slave trade to colonial Virginia, how the Igbo and their descendents contributed to life in Virginia and America.

Location: West African Farm & 1850s American Farm.

Holidays in History

Discover how Christmas was and was not celebrated in the past, and how Christmas past compares to Christmas today. This program is offered in the month of December. ***Location: German Farm, English Farm and either 1820s American Farm or 1850s American Farm.***

School Days

Do you want your students to truly appreciate how good they have it in your classroom? A session at the Museum's Early American Schoolhouse is just what they need. This program features a brief history of early American education, and invites students to compare life at their modern school day to that of students in the early nineteenth century. The program includes basic lessons from early American textbooks led by the "schoolmaster." ***We recommend that this program be paired with a program on one of our 19th century American farms.***



Education Outreach Program Descriptions

Think a field trip to the Frontier Culture Museum is impossible in these tight fiscal times? We have good news for you! The Museum will come to you! We will bring quality programs right into your school! The following Education Outreach Programs are available in January, February and early March, and these programs can be presented in a classroom setting or as an "assembly" style experience. The Museum's education team is prepared to work closely with you to accomplish your classroom goals.

Settling the Backcountry:

Early Settlement and Everyday Life in the Valley of Virginia –

Students learn why people settled the Virginia frontier in the 18th century. Everyone participates in the daily life of early settlers, and discovers whether they have the skills to survive in the backcountry. Your class is challenged to understand the frontier experience and to reach their own conclusions about the settlers and their lives.

Virginia SOL's: Virginia Studies - VS1, VS4; History and Social Science – USI.5

Program is suitable for elementary, middle, and high school grades.

Program length is 45 minutes.

The “Soundtrack” to the Settling of America –

Explore early America's musical heritage through live performance with the Museum's own musicians. Students and teachers listen and learn as our musicians reveal the wide-ranging cultural influences that blended together to form the music of early American. Students learn the songs and dances of our ancestors and become part of the performance.

Virginia SOL's: Music - K4, 1.3, 2.3, 3.4, 3.11, 4.10, 5.4, 5.9, 5.11, HS.5.

Program is suitable for elementary, middle, and high school grades.

Program length is 45 minutes.

Quest for the West –

Why did German-speaking farmers from the southwestern states of the Holy Roman Empire, and English-speaking farmer-weavers from Ireland's northernmost province of Ulster leave their homes for the American colonies in the 1700s? What could have caused them to risk their lives and the lives of their families to cross the Atlantic for the uncertain rewards of a new life in an unfamiliar place? Your class becomes part of the story and learns the answers to these questions and more through costumed role-playing.

Virginia SOL's: Virginia Studies - VS.1; Theater Arts - M.2, M.7, TI; History and Social Science – USI.5

Program is suitable for third to twelfth grade.

Program length is 45 minutes.

Mystery in the Wilderness –

Every family has its stories, some families have mysteries. In this family story, your class meets Greta, a young German woman who leaves the Old World and travels to the American colonies. Her story is a story of courage and devotion as she searches for lost relatives in the Virginia backcountry during the time of the French and Indian War. Students learn about life on the western edge of the British Empire during times of danger and hardship.

Virginia SOL's: Virginia Studies - VS1, VS4; History and Social Science – USI.5

Program is suitable for elementary grade levels.

Program length is 45 minutes.

From West Africa to West of the Blue Ridge

West Africa and Virginia have a deep historical connection that has been almost forgotten. Drawing on the research behind the planning and construction of the Museum's West African Farm, this program uses a PowerPoint presentation and objects to explore this connection

through the history and culture of the Igbo people, a West African group with an especially strong presence in colonial Virginia. Your class will learn how and why so many Igbo and other West Africans were brought to Virginia, where they lived and what they did, how they reached the colonial frontier, as well as the many important contributions they and their American descendents made to life in Virginia and America.

Virginia SOL's: Virginia Studies - VS.4; History and Social Science - USI.4, USI.5, WHII.4, WHII.5, VUS.2, VUS.3; Related SOL's: History and Social Science - 3.2, 3.4, 3.7, WHI.10

Program is suitable for third grade and higher.
Program length is 45 minutes.

Things Fall Apart

Designed for twelfth-grade readers of Chinua Achebe's classic novel *Things Fall Apart*, this PowerPoint presentation highlights the geographic, historical, material, and social contexts of main character Okonkwo's life as an Igbo. The program draws from the Frontier Culture Museum's research and development of its West African Farm and follows the organization and sequence of the novel. Images of social customs, musical instruments, houses, masquerade costumes, masks, and everyday items familiar to Okonkwo appear in the same chronological order as introduced in the book, and are cited by chapter. This program length can accommodate block scheduling.

Virginia English SOL 12.3.

Self-Guided Program Opportunities

The Museum grounds feature a variety of environments suitable for many kinds of science field studies. The following are two examples:

Water and Wetlands:

Students can sample a stream using Save Our Streams protocol. The museum has a stream study kit available for teacher use.

Trees and Shrubs:

The Old World loop has a variety of specimen trees from Europe including English Oak, Hedge Maple and Cornelian Cherry. Native American specimens include Swamp White Oak, Fringe Tree, Tulip Poplar and Black Gum.

Plan Your Visit

The Frontier Culture Museum offers a wide variety of fascinating information and history. Preparing your students prior to the Museum visit enhances the learning experience. We have included some examples of pre-visit activities. The Museum's educational programs are centered on key Virginia Standards of Learning (VA SOLs). When choosing a program, check to see if the program matches your study and the VA SOL you are focusing on. If you need assistance with this, please call the Education Department at the Museum. Each of the programs offered has a theme and objective that is supported by classroom learning. Each program concentrates on very specific areas of the Museum. During these focus programs, students will have the

opportunity to touch, see, smell, and use all their senses to be active learners. With the proper preparation, a field trip to the Frontier Culture Museum can be more than fun, it can be meaningful.

Questions to help you prepare for your museum visit:

1. How will the Museum focus fit into my classroom studies?
2. What do I want the students to learn during the visit?
3. How will information be processed and analyzed?

Prepare Your Students

1. Assess what your students know.

Create a chart in the classroom of topics you covered that are relevant to what they might learn at the Museum.

2. Research and Gather

Students can research different areas of history that are covered at the Museum. Encourage the students to look for primary sources as well as the Frontier Culture Museum website.

3. What do the students want to learn while visiting the museum?

Have the students create a list of questions or topics to bring with them during their tour. The students are welcome to ask questions of the interpreters to find more specific answers.

Examples of Historical Themes Represented at the Museum:

- * 17th and 18th C. European History i.e. Great Britain and Germany
- * 17th and 18th C. European Architecture
- * 18th and 19th C. Early American Architecture
- * 18th C. West African History and Architecture
- * Daily lives of 17th and 18th C. European, West African and Early Americans
- * Historic Woodworking
- * Settlement west of the Blue Ridge Mountains
- * Fiber processing
- * Old World Immigration to Early America
- * Historic Food ways

Pre Visit Classroom Discussion

Making Predictions

Why do you think the people from Germany, Ireland, England and West Africa were emigrating, and why do you think they were going to America? Was it for economic, political, or social reasons? After investigating the agriculture, social history and geography of the areas, what are your predictions? The time periods were:

Germany - early 18th century

Ireland - early 18th century

England - late 17th century

West Africa – 18th century

Making Choices!

You are leaving for a new country. You do not know what your life will be like in this new country. It is likely you will never see your family and old friends again. You will be traveling

on a crowded ship across the Atlantic Ocean for at least 14 weeks before you reach your destination. Choose three items to take with you to your new home and explain the importance of each item. Choose carefully, as you can not return to your home for more items!

How'd They Do That?

Farming in the 19th century was a tough job. Think about all the tools you would need to be a successful farmer and make a list. Compare that list to what today's farmers use. Do you think it would be easier being a farmer today or then? Give differing examples.

Hey Mom, What's For Dinner?

The early frontier settlers worked very hard, so they needed to eat much more than we do today. Think about where these people might have gotten their food and what types of food they ate. Do you think we eat the same food today? What do you think is different and why?

Our House Is A Very Fine House

Draw a picture of your house. Next to your picture make a list of what your house is built from. Take your picture and list with you when you come to the Museum and discover how houses were built and why they were built that way! See if there is a difference from houses today!

Post Visit Classroom Discussion

What's Old is New Again!

Do you remember the tools on the farm site? Draw three or four of these old tools in one column and in the other column draw what they look like today! What difference do you see? Why do you think our tools today are different?

Mail a Postcard

On a large index card, draw a picture of your favorite thing from the Museum. On the back side write to a friend or family member about some of the things you saw on your field trip and what you learned! When you are all finished, mail your postcard to them.

Write a Short Story

Imagine that you had to leave behind your family, and you would never be able to see them again. Early American immigrants experienced this loss in order to create a better future for themselves and their family. Write a short story using examples and information you received during your Museum visit to create a short story.

Lights Camera Action!

Using what you saw and learned from your museum visit, create a play that depicts a day in the life of _____. To make it manageable, choose one location such as the American Farm Site, English Farm Site etc. Have members of you class act out the parts!



Coming to the Museum

Your Field Trip at the Frontier Culture Museum can either be Self-Guided or Guided.

Visit the Museum

We recommend that you visit the Museum before hand to help you decide what you want your students to see and learn as well as get a feel for the time.

Choose a Program

Your visit should be an extension of the classroom. Decide carefully which of the many programs best supports your classroom curriculum. If time permits, you may choose more than one.

Dress

The Frontier Culture Museum is an outdoor living history Museum, therefore it is important that students dress for the current weather.

Lunch

Your group will have several suitable choices as to where to eat your lunch.

Shopping

The Museum has a wonderful store with great gift ideas and children's section. If your group plans to shop, please allow 20 minutes and chaperone them in small groups.

Chaperones

The Museum recommends 1 chaperone per 5 pre K-2nd and 1 chaperone for every 10 students above 3rd grade. This is to ensure safety and accessibility to small exhibits.

Confirmation

You will receive a confirmation by e-mail or fax stating the approximate cost and schedule for your planned visit. Please review this carefully and contact the Museum to make any necessary changes before arrival .

Arrival

Please plan on arriving at least 15 minutes prior to your tour. This will give you time to check-in, organize your groups/chaperones and allow for a restroom break.

General Information

Reservations

Reservations are required for all school programs. You can call 540.332.7850 or go on-line at www.frontiermuseum.org/education/registration.php

Please have the following information ready when you call:

Class Grade Level, Number of Students, Number of Teachers, Number of Adult Chaperones, School Address and Phone Number, Email Address, Program of Choice, Date and Time of Field Trip, Number if Pizza Lunches or Gift Bags (if applicable).

Program Rates

Call the Museum at 540.332.7850 for our fee schedule.

Payment and Cancellations

Payments are made on the day of the field trip upon check-in at the Visitor Center. Education Programs are held rain or shine. The Museum kindly asks that in the event of a cancellation, you call 24 hours before your scheduled tour to avoid a 20% cancellation fee.

Group Leaders

Group Leaders are responsible for students' behavior and must remain with their students at all times. Please keep in mind that other schools may be at the Museum at the same time you are.

Food & Gift Bags

The Museum Store will kindly arrange a pizza lunch at a reasonable price for your school group. Gift bags are also available. Advanced reservations are required. Please include this information when you schedule your field trip.

Museum Store

Funds from the Museum Store support educational programming and field trips to the Museum. Teachers will find great resources and references books at the Store. Students will enjoy affordable toys, games, souvenirs, etc.

Accessibility

The Frontier Culture Museum makes every effort to provide a quality educational program to all students. When booking a field trip, please notify the reservations office of any participants with disabilities.

Location

We are located near the intersection of I-81 and I-64 in Staunton, Virginia. I-81, Exit 222, Route 250 West will find us. The Museum is 1/2 mile on the left. Free parking is available.

Grant Information

The Frontier Culture Museum is pleased to make grant money available to qualified education groups.

What are the American Frontier Culture Foundation's funding criteria?

The Grant Committee will review all applications, and based on the grant money available, will award grants based on the following criteria:

- * How the field trip meets the specific needs of the class
- * The clarity of the goals and objectives for a field trip to the Museum
- * What the teacher will bring to the classroom in preparation of the field trip
- * What the teacher will bring to the classroom in follow-up activities after the field trip

What are the responsibilities of the grant recipients?

- * Teacher to complete and submit an evaluation form within 30 days of the trip
- * Teacher to submit pre and post lesson plans for Museum Teacher Resources
- * Students to write/draw thank you notes for their field trip that we can send to the organization providing the grant funding

What will be funded?

- * Transportation
- * Admission
- * Lunch
- * Gift bags

What will not be funded?

Grant funds are not intended to replace or relieve the existing responsibility for public funding of school programs, nor are they intended to substitute for items funded by the PTOs or included in the regular school budget. Transportation funds will be awarded only to schools more than 75 miles away from the Museum.

If you would like more information about this program, kindly contact the Museum.

